



Research for People and the Planet

September 5, 2012

Chris Schoneman
Project Leader
Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge Complex
906 W Sinclair
Calipatria CA 92233

via email: Christian_Schoneman@fws.gov

RE: Support for Red Hill Bay Habitat Development Proposal

Dear Chris:

On behalf of the Pacific Institute, I am writing to express our strong support for the National Wildlife Refuge's proposal to the state's Salton Sea Financial Assistance Program, to create shallow habitat cells atop the playa at Red Hill Bay.

The Pacific Institute has a long-standing interest in Salton Sea restoration and conservation efforts. The proposed habitat project would construct hundreds of acres of high quality, shallow water habitat at relatively low cost. As you know, we have long supported the concept of constructing wetlands atop the exposed playa at Red Hill Bay, for both habitat and air quality management benefits. The additional benefits accruing from the Refuge staff's wildlife expertise and the construction and hydraulic expertise of the Imperial Irrigation District further strengthen the value of this proposal.

We strongly support the disbursement of state-held funds to construct new habitat and expand and improve existing habitat. The proposed project meets these objectives.

We thank the Refuge and Imperial Irrigation District for developing this important and worthwhile habitat construction project, and are pleased to lend our strong support to this proposal.

Sincerely,

Michael Cohen
Senior Associate
Pacific Institute
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